

first and second elastomeric side panels bonded to the composite structure in the first waist region;

first and second elastomeric side panels bonded to the composite structure in the second waist region;

further comprising support members bonded to and extending transversely outward from the first and second elastomeric side panels in the first waist region;

support members bonded to and extending transversely outward from the first and second elastomeric side panels in the second waist region; and

a fastening system for releasably securing the absorbent article in a pant-like configuration, the fastening system comprising wherein the first and second mating fastening components are disposed on the support members in the first waist region adapted to releasably engage first and second fastening components disposed on the support members in the second waist region;

wherein the elastomeric side panels in the first waist region are longitudinally spaced from the elastomeric side panels in the second waist region, and a width of the elastomeric side panels in the first waist region is the same as a width of the elastomeric side panels in the second waist region.

23. (Once Amended) The absorbent article of claim 24 22, wherein the first and second fastening components comprise integral portions of the support members.

Remarks

The application contains claims 5, 8, 14-20 and 22-29. Claim 21 has been canceled so as not to delay allowance of the present application. Claim 22 has been made independent, and claim 23 has been amended to depend from claim 22. A **Clean Version Of Pending Claims** is enclosed and made a part hereof. Reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

A. Rejection Of Claims 5, 8, 14-19 and 25-28 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 5, 8, 14-19 and 25-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,846,262 issued December 8, 1998 to Sayama et al. ("Sayama") in view of U.S. Statutory Invention Registration H1674 published August 5, 1997